

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 6 NUMBER 1
JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2007

AUTO SHOWS

Arizona International Auto Show

Los Angeles Auto Show

NAIAS Detroit Show Preview

Cycle World International Motorcycle Show

VEHICLES • EQUIPMENT • SAFETY • PERFORMANCE • MAINTENANCE • MOTORSPORTS • EVENTS • DESTINATIONS • ATTRACTIONS

Auto Show Season

GREATER
LA AUTO SHOW

PHOENIX

Arizona International Auto Show

PHOENIX CONVENTION CENTER
NOVEMBER 23-26, 2006

"Green" vehicles, luxury rides and more at the Arizona International Auto Show

More than 400 of the latest cars, trucks, minivans and sport/utility vehicles rolled into the Phoenix Convention Center for the 2007-Model Arizona International Auto Show in late November. This special automotive event allowed attendees to check out all the newest vehicles in a non-selling environment.

There was an opportunity to learn more about the increasingly popular "green" auto movement, including hybrids and alternative fuel vehicles. The show also offered the public an up-close look at concept cars, crossover vehicles, sports cars and much more.

Visitors also got a look at the \$600 million expansion of the Phoenix Convention Center, which will triple the Center's size by nearly 900,000 square feet of rentable space to more than 2 million square feet total. The expansion is taking place in phases so the Center remains open for convention business throughout. Phase one was complete in July 2006, and the balance will be finished in 2008 and open for business in 2009.

Representatives from more than 30 leading manufacturers were on site to answer questions and provide information on the latest vehicles. Ride & Drive events and special exhibits included:

Arizona Ford Dealers Ride & Drive and The All New Chevy Silverado Ride & Drive: Attendees had a chance to get a real feel for the performance and handling of several Ford models including the redesigned Ford Expedition EL. Attendees also checked out the all-new Ford Edge (not available for test drives). They also could try out the all-new Chevrolet Silverado.

Exotic Vehicle Display: Come see a collection of high-dollar-value exotic vehicles from Ferrari & Maserati, courtesy of Scottsdale Ferrari Maserati.

Ford SEMA Vehicles: Ford brought two SEMA vehicles, the Ford Mustang GT Convertible "Built Live" and the Ford Explorer Sport Trac "Adventurer."

Celebrity Vehicles on Display: Celebrity owned and customized vehicles, courtesy of G.A.M.E. Automotive.

The Arizona International Auto Show is produced by *Motor Trend Auto Shows, Inc.* and presented by the Valley Auto Dealers Association. ■



LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles Auto Show

LOS ANGELES CONVENTION CENTER
DECEMBER 1-10, 2006

Over two dozen world and North American debuts, and 1000 of the latest cars and trucks, all at the LA Auto Show

The Phoenix show is a good one to get you in the general mood, but the Los Angeles show is one of the big boys, and pretty convenient for Arizonans to attend. This one's on a par (arguably) with the biggest of all—Paris, Geneva, Tokyo, Frankfurt, New York and Detroit—but just a one-hour flight or six-hour drive away. We opted for the flight, arriving for the two press days on November 29-30 before the show opened to the public. (But of course we recommend the drive if you have the time.)

This is a chance to walk through the whole show as the finishing touches are put on displays, and in fact before (and as) many brand new products and concepts are revealed for the first time. The press days also mean a lot of miles of walking, all in the LA Convention Center, carrying cameras and notebooks and an ever-growing pile of literature, CDs, trinkets and memorabilia (professional bling), so it's wise to wear lightweight clothing and really comfortable shoes. At the same time, press days mean a lot of meet and greet, with name tag in place, so it's wise to wear a sport coat and really uncomfortable shoes. The best part is the media center, where all the heavy gear and literature is packed and shipped back to our office door by trained professionals.

The general show opened on Friday, December 1, though those with the means (or an extra itch for a jump on things) could attend Sneak Preview Night on Thursday, touring the show with a VIP group of sorts and enjoying a cash bar and hors d'oeuvres for just \$125 (or \$250 with deluxe hors d'oeuvres). Don't ask us what the difference is—we were back in Arizona by the time that event got going.

The displays have tremendous planning, funding and energy behind them. Much is apparent during the public show, but press reveals can be as stunning for a mildly revised Japanese sedan as the stage show at a Pink Floyd stadium tour.

Growing number of world debuts staged for LA Auto Show press days

In a shift of emphasis, automakers conducted more world debuts than ever before at the 2006 LA Auto Show. The LA show ran in January until a couple of

Audi R8



Dodge Challenger



Aston Martin AMV8



Toyota FJ Cruiser



years ago, but now the earlier dates make the LA Auto Show the first major North American auto show of the season. A record-breaking 21 world debuts and 12-plus North American introductions occurred during press days, November 29 and 30. The new dates help automakers looking to gain an early edge for their newest production and concept vehicles.

According to Ed Welburn, GM's vice president of global design, "California has long been a leader in cutting-edge design, advanced technology and environmental awareness—three areas that are literally redefining the automobile around the world, and three areas where GM is intensely focused right now," Welburn said. "The Los Angeles Auto Show is a major platform for positioning our company with global automotive leaders and media." He meant it, too, as the press days began with a keynote by GM Chairman Rick Wagoner, introduced by Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, in which both men addressed the challenges and opportunities facing governments and automakers, head on. The theme for this year's show, *A New Beginning*, aptly captures this pivotal point.

Another shift occurring with the LA Auto Show is the growing emphasis of design. In addition to the show hosting upwards of 500 automobile designers at the third Design Los Angeles conference, there will be a record number of seven concept vehicles making their world debut. Four of these seven—Acura, Honda, Hyundai and Mazda—were designed by their Los Angeles-based studios. These concepts are among the most forward-thinking expressions of new design directions for their brands.

"With our US headquarters in the Los Angeles area and our R&D Design Centers playing an ever increasing global role, it makes great sense for American Honda to increase our presence at the LA Auto Show," said John Mendel, senior vice president of American Honda Co., Inc. "We believe (our) concepts reflect the automotive excitement and passion of our Southern California designers."

Additionally, more than a dozen vehicles were introduced to the North American market for the first time. From Audi and its R8 super sports car to Volvo's nimble new C30, a wide range of model types were revealed, including vehicles from Ferrari, Hyundai, Jaguar, Kia, Land Rover, Lotus, Maserati, Mercedes-Benz and Porsche.

Acknowledging the growing importance of the LA Auto Show, the Organisation Internationale des Constructeurs d'Automobiles (OICA), an international automotive trade association, has placed the show on its international calendar for the first time.



Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa



GM Chairman Rick Wagoner



J Mays and the Ford Interceptor Concept



BMW X5



KEEP RIGHT >>

LOS ANGELES

(CONT'D)

To get a feel for the breadth and depth of the LA Auto Show, from which we can bring you only a handful of images here, check out this list of debuts and concepts from the 2006 show:

World debuts

Acura Advanced Sedan Concept
Aston Martin V8 Vantage Roadster
Audi TT Roadster
BMW Hydrogen 7
BMW X5
Buick Enclave
Callaway C16
Chrysler Sebring Convertible
Ford Escape
Ford Escape Hybrid
Giugiaro Mustang Concept
GMC Yukon Hybrid
Honda FCX Concept
Honda REMIX Concept
Honda STEP BUS Concept
Hyundai HCD 10 Hellion
Lamborghini Murcielago LP640 Roadster
Mazda Nagare Concept
Nissan Altima Coupe
Nissan Sentra SE-R
Saturn Aura Green Line
Saturn VUE
Volkswagen Tiguan

North American debuts

Audi R8
Ferrari 599
Hyundai Tiburon
Jaguar XK-R
Kia Amanti
Kia Rondo
Land Rover LR2
Lotus Exige S
Mercedes Benz CL63 AMG
Mercedes Benz S63 AMG
Porsche GT3
Porsche Targa 4
Volvo C30

Concept vehicles

Acura Advanced Sedan
Chrysler Imperial
Dodge Challenger
Dodge Hornet
Giugiaro Mustang
Honda FCX
Honda REMIX
Honda STEP BUS
Hyundai HCD 10 Hellion
Mazda Nagare
Saab Aero X
Volkswagen Tiguan



Volkswagen Tiguan



Mazda Nagare Concept



Nissan Altima Coupe



Land Rover LR2

Aftermarket

Of course, any Arizona motorhead also tries to attend the SEMA show in Las Vegas, earlier in November. If you want to get a bit of SEMA at the same time as the rest of this show action, consider this: the Los Angeles Auto Show has a tremendous aftermarket show included. In addition to amazing displays from all the major vehicle manufacturers, the LA Auto Show is a place to discover and purchase almost anything you can think of associated with cars, trucks, vans and SUVs. Kentia Hall is where it's at for all the fun things one can do to a vehicle. Here is a glimpse of what we found at this year's show:

Specialty Vehicles - Conversion vans remain popular with families and folks with active lifestyles and given \$3/gallon fuel, alternative fuel vehicles were there, too.

DUB Celebrity Car Showcase - This giant exhibit, like DUB Magazine itself, featured tricked-out vehicles from some of the hottest music and sports celebrities.

Wheels, Tires & Suspension - Stock just won't cut it anymore, and wheel manufacturers were on hand to show all the latest styles and sizes for cars, trucks and SUVs. Of course a set of wheels won't do you much good without tires to match, so Yokohama Tire had an assortment of the round and black rubber on display.

Tuners & Performance - The quest for more has now reached dealerships and manufacturers.

Trucks, Vans & SUVs - Truck, van and SUV owners certainly aren't left out when it comes to vehicle personalizing at the LA Auto Show.

Electronics & Technology - Satellite technology has taken the automotive world by storm these past few years, especially for navigation systems and radio.

Appearance - This is what gets you noticed on the streets and in the valet lots.

Motorsports - Plenty of exhibitors to whet the appetites of racing enthusiasts for the 2007 season.

Hydrogen and alternative fuels

Outside the LA Convention Center, we found a full contingent of hydrogen-powered (and other alternative fuel) vehicles, from Honda, Ford, GM, even a big Dodge pickup, including some already in use by the military. We were offered a chance to drive several of them, and we'd like to say we did. We'd also like to say we drove them up Highway One with Arnold Schwarzenegger. But, alas, we had a plane to catch and this story to file by deadline, so we had to pass—for now. But we'll be back next year, and we'd encourage you to starting planning, now, to do the same. ■



Scion xA



DETROIT PREVIEW

NAIAS: North American International Auto Show

COBO CONFERENCE/EXHIBITION CENTER
JANUARY 13-21, 2007

We'll bring you some news of this enormously significant show in our next issue. Here are some of the highlights already on the schedule for Detroit:

Debuts and concept vehicles

Acura Advanced Sports
Audi Q7 V12 TDI
2007 BMW 3 Series Convertible
2008 Cadillac CTS
Chevrolet Camaro
Convertible Concept
2008 Chevrolet Malibu
Chevrolet Volt Concept
Chrysler Nassau Concept
2008 Dodge Avenger
2008 Dodge Caravan and Chrysler Town & Country
2008 Dodge Magnum SRT-8
2008 Dodge Viper SRT-10
Ford Airstream Concept
2008 Ford Focus
2008 Ford Five Hundred
Ford Interceptor Concept
Honda Accord Coupe Concept
2007 Hyundai Veracruz
Jaguar C-XF Concept
Jeep Trailhawk Concept
Kia Kue Crossover Concept
2007 Lamborghini Murciélago LP640 Roadster
Lexus LF-A Concept
2008 Lexus IS-F
Lincoln MKR Concept
Maserati Quattroporte
Mazda Ryuga Concept
2008 Mazda Tribute HEV Hybrid
Mercedes-Benz Ocean Drive Concept Convertible
2007 Mini Convertible Sidewalk
2008 Mitsubishi Evolution X
2008 Mitsubishi Lancer
Nissan Bevel Concept
2008 Nissan Rogue
Pontiac G6 GXP
Pontiac G6 GXP Street
Pontiac Torrent GXP
Porsche Cayenne
Rolls-Royce Phantom Drophead Coupe
2008 smart fortwo
2008 Subaru Legacy and Outback
Toyota FT-HS Hybrid Sports Concept
2007 Toyota Tundra CrewMax
2007 Toyota Tundra Double Cab
Volvo XC60 Concept ■



Jaguar C-XF Concept



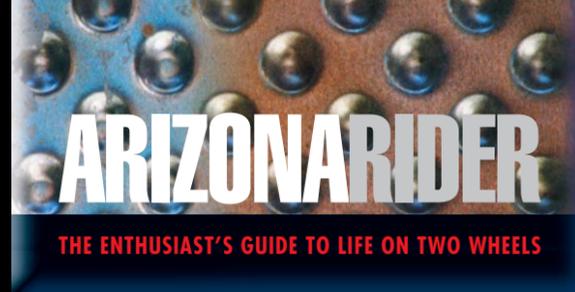
smart fortwo



Nissan Bevel Concept



Kia Kue Concept



PHOENIX

Cycle World International Motorcycle Show

CARDINALS STADIUM
NOVEMBER 3-5, 2006

Street bikes, dirt bikes, ATVs and more at Cycle World International Motorcycle Show® presented by Toyota

Hundreds of 2007-model street bikes, dirt bikes, cruisers, concept bikes and vintage bikes from more than 17 manufacturers rolled into the new Cardinals Stadium for the three-day 2007-Model Cycle World International Motorcycle Show® presented by Toyota. From cool custom choppers and tricked out sport bikes to everything off-road, this show offered something for everyone. This motorcycle extravaganza gave enthusiasts of all ages the opportunity to check out the latest gear and aftermarket accessories and see amazing live-action entertainment, including the BOSS "Ball of Steel" Freestyle Stunt Show. New this year, a welcome center educated potential first-time riders on how to get started, safety courses, necessary gear and more.

There were representatives from more than 17 manufacturers—including Honda, Yamaha, Harley Davidson, Ducati, Suzuki, Victory, Kawasaki, Vespa, Aprilia, BMW, Buell, Husqvarna, Moto Guzzi, MV Agusta, Piaggio, Star and URAL—on site to answer questions and provide information on the latest motorcycles. For the 13th consecutive year, Cycle World, the nation's most popular motorcycle magazine, was the title sponsor for the series, and Toyota returned as presenting sponsor. Progressive Motorcycle Insurance was once again the official product sponsor.

The Cycle World International Motorcycle Shows® presented by Toyota is Fueled by Advanstar, the leading provider of integrated media solutions to the automotive aftermarket, off-road and powersports industries (www.advanstar.com).

For information about next year's show, check out www.motorcycleshows.com ■



Photos: Spin Communications

